THE YOUTH SERVICE AND TRAUMA

Keith McCaugherty
Development Officer
Youth Work Alliance
Trauma

- The Youth Service has operated amidst trauma and traumatic events for decades.
- But have we ever unpicked what it’s about and how we could respond?
- Some young people’s lives are highly complex and some have ‘inherited’ trauma from their parents.
- We operate in environments where ‘toxic stress’ levels are often rife.
How can even the most basic knowledge of what trauma and toxic stress are benefit the Youth Service?
PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA ARE:

- 4 Times More Likely To Become An Alcoholic
- 4 Times More Likely To Develop A Sexually Transmitted Disease
- 4 Times More Likely To Inject Drugs
- 3 Times More Likely To Use Antidepressant Medication
- 3 Times More Likely To Be Absent From Work
- 15 Times More Likely To Commit Suicide
- 2.5 Times More Likely To Smoke Tobacco
- 3 Times More Likely To Have Serious Job Problems
- 3 Times More Likely To Experience Depression
Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris

- The Surgeon General for California
- Established the Center for Youth Wellness (CYW) in San Francisco
- In the Bayview/Hunter’s Point area; which in 2010 was a neighbourhood with a poverty rate of 39%
- CYW identified that exposure to this factor, along with high violence, increases the likelihood for detrimental health outcomes
- This has major relevance to the areas that the START programme is present in
The Path to Trauma

Positive Stress

Tolerable Stress

Toxic Stress

Trauma
Simple Trauma
One overwhelming traumatic event

Complex Trauma
Multiple highly stressful events
Trauma = Toxic Stress

Threatened and helpless
Bessel van der Kolk

Fear, terror, helplessness
Bruce Perry
Developmental Trauma
(also called Relational Trauma)

Results from multiple, prolonged, adverse events, often beginning in early childhood relationships.

Includes physical, emotional, and educational neglect and maltreatment.

Bessel van der Kolk
Which of these is the primary effect of relational trauma?

a. Impaired Trust
b. Impaired Learning
c. Emotional Numbing
d. Emotional Dysregulation
Emotional Dysregulation
So what does that look like?

- Can create the ‘bodyguard’ approach
- Anger is the bodyguard of sad, vulnerable, anxious, worried and pained
- All behaviour is communication
Components of a trauma-informed Youth Service

- Creating a Safe Environment
- Building Relationships and Connectedness
- Supporting and Teaching Emotional Regulation
“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river.

We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”

- Desmond Tutu
The Circle of Courage

Reclaiming Youth At Risk: A model for youth service delivery

Peter Nixon
S.T.A.R.T. Programme Youth Outreach Worker – Brandywell & Creggan
The Circle of Courage

Outline of the Circle of Courage model

Other training completed to complement the use of this model

How reflection is embedded within the START programme

How we are monitoring outcomes and the impacts of START
Reclaiming Youth at risk

- Planning Restorative Outcomes
- Circle of Courage
- Art of Kid Whispering
- Trauma
- Brain Development
Glasgow – study visit
ACEs Training

70/30 Campaign: Empowering Communities to Protect Our Children

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and wellbeing

- Abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Physical abuse
  - Sexual abuse

- Neglect
  - Emotional neglect
  - Physical neglect

Household Challenges
- Domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness
- Parental separation / divorce
- Incarcerated parent

People with 6+ ACEs can die 20 yrs earlier than those who have none

1/8 of the population have more than 4 ACEs

4 or more ACEs

- \(3\times\) the levels of lung disease and adult smoking
- \(14\times\) the number of suicide attempts
- \(11\times\) the level of intravenous drug abuse
- 4.5x more likely to develop depression
- \(2\times\) the level of liver disease
- \(4\times\) as likely to have begun intercourse by age 16

Adverse childhood experiences are the single greatest unaddressed public health threat facing our nation today

Dr. Robert Block, the former President of the American Academy of Pediatrics

67% of the population have at least 1 ACE

Life span

Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Early Death
- Disease, Disability, Social Problems
- Adoption of Health-risk Behaviours
- Social, Emotional, Cognitive Impairment
- Disrupted Neurodevelopment

www.70-30.org.uk
@7030Campaign
Impact the training has had to date ...

• Impact on me

• Impact on my colleagues

• Impact on wider society
The components of the model

- Independence
- Generosity
- Belonging
- Mastery
Number of Close Adult Relationships and School Success


#ThePowerOfOne
Responsibility Requires Successful Coping

Self-Control
Managing inner emotions and impulses

Life Challenges
Managing external problems and stressors
The juvenile justice system is dealing with youth who bring extreme histories of relational trauma, neurological problems, lags in conscience development, and lack of self-regulation.

David Roush
National Juvenile Detention Association
Pain-Based Behaviour
These are other examples of pain-based behaviour
The Powerlessness of Punishment

The longer they are part of the delinquent subculture, and the more they have been punished, the greater their distrust of adults. They drown the emptiness of their lives with a relentless pursuit of excitement.

Michael Montgomery - social worker and anthropologist during “The Troubles”
The Path to Resilience

- Stress
- Supports
- Strengths
Programs don’t change kids, people do.

BILL MILLIKEN

Programs that assist the most provide support similar to an extended family.

EMMY WERNER & RUTH SMITH
Case Study – reflecting on impact and the outcomes

I’m calling him ‘Wee Jimmy’

The Beginning
I’m calling him ‘Wee Jimmy’

The Middle
I’m calling him ‘Wee Jimmy’

Next Steps
Any Questions ...
Key questions –

Could the Circle of Courage model be embedded into a Youth Service curriculum moving forward?

How would this look and what challenges might that bring?